

CONGRATS TO ...

Rocky Mountain Ballet Theatre dancers **Ashley Hagler** of Missoula and **Patric Palkens** of Livingston, who took top honors in the Impulstanz Contemporary Festival and Ballet Competition in Vienna, Austria. Hagler won the contemporary dance category with her solo variation, “Cliff Notes,” and she and Palkens took third place behind China and Russia in the classical ballet professional Pas de deux performing the Black Swan from act three of “Swan Lake.” In addition, Russia’s Vladimir Malakhov, president of the jury, awarded them the highest ranking in all the categories in which they were judged: 12 out of 12 possible points. Both Hager and Palkens have signed professional contracts for next year with the Salzburg ballet company. The Missoula-based



Patric Palkens and Ashley Hagler

dance company, under the leadership of **Charlene Campbell Carey**, has been in residency in Europe since June, when she participated in a series of workshops on the island of Ischia that culminated in a gala performance in the main square of the city of Forio. Campbell Carey also taught a lengthy series of master classes and set her choreography in Paris, Saint Quentin, Oslo, Krakow and Vienna, before her Montana company joined her in Rome. In July the group moved into the facilities of the Salzburg International Ballet Academy, and has been engaged in a program of intense rehearsals and performing, culminating in an “all-Montana” program on July 19 that officially opened the famed Salzburg Festspiele. The tour concluded in August with a series of gala concerts in Salzburg and Munich under the leadership of Peter Breuer in his 10th anniversary production of “Swan Lake.”

Butte author **David Abrams**, whose 864-word short story, “A Little Bit of Everything,” won second place in *Glimmer Train’s* Very Short Fiction Contest. One of the most respected short-story journals in print, *Glimmer Train* is represented in recent editions of the *Pushcart Prize: Best of the Small Presses*, *New Stories from the Midwest*, *The PEN/O. Henry Prize Stories*, *New Stories from the South*, *Best of the West*, and *Best American Short Stories*. Abrams says his story was inspired by an obituary he read in Butte’s *Montana Standard* newspaper a few years ago. Abrams is the author of *Fobbit*, a novel about the Iraq War (Grove/Atlantic), and *The Quivering Pen*, a blog about books.

Helena playwright **Ed Noonan**, whose play, “Deserving Art,” was staged June 14-15 in Seattle as part of the Northwest New Works Festival. Helena Theatre Company members **Mike Casey**, **Kevin Casey**, **Colleen Casey**, **Pete Ruzevich**, **Beverly Fox** and **Retta Leaphart** performed the opening scene of the new play at On the Board’s Studio Theatre. The NWNW Festival is the leading event in the Northwest for artists to unveil new theatrical and dance work, Noonan told the *Independent Record*. A few of the questions he explores in the play are: Do the ins and outs of funding support or hinder the creation of art? And how does the artist survive in American culture? Noonan, who is retiring this summer after 14 years as executive director of the Myrna Loy Center, told the *IR*, “Northwest New Works is often a springboard for artists to get started, so it’s fun to come back as a playwright and participate with them.”

— From the *Independent Record*, June 14

Billings vocalist **Ellen Moak**, who won the Billings Symphony Orchestra and Chorale’s “Country Idol” contest. In collaboration with the *Billings Gazette*, five finalists were selected through a YouTube audition process, and performed live at Symphony in the Park. The winner was chosen through a public online vote on the *Gazette’s* website. In addition to Moak, finalists included **Désja Eagle Tail** of Crow Agency, and three candidates from Wyoming: **Doug Balmain**, **Jill Wright**, and **Amyntas Hinckley**. Music Director Anne Harrigan was extremely pleased with all of the contestants’ performances at Symphony in the Park and said it was a “pleasure to perform with these young and talented artists.” Moak, who graduated from Rocky Mountain College with a bachelor’s degree in vocal performance, currently works in the box office as well as in the executive office at the Alberta Bair Theater. She also sings in the band, Ellen and the Old School, which plays throughout the Billings area. The vocalist will join the orchestra and chorale again during the March season concert titled “Gone Country.”



Ellen Moak

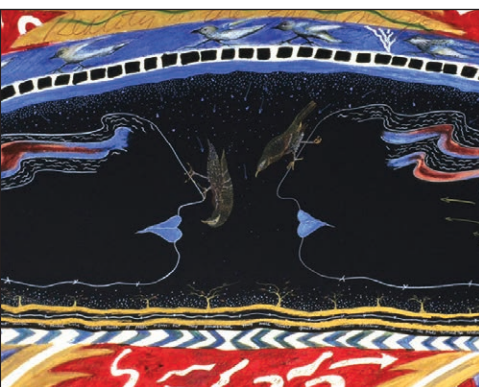
The first place winners in the Montana State Old-Time Fiddle Contest, held July 26 in Choteau: **Steve Stafford**, Kalispell, Championship Division; **Janet McGehee**, Big Timber, Adult; **Annika Bennion**, Sidney, Junior-Junior; **Tarquin Bennion**, Sidney, Pee-Wee; **Fred Buckley**, Roundup, Senior; **Maggie Magee**, Dillon, Junior; and **Robbie Schwindt**, Missoula, Novice.

Montana documentary photographer **Paula Morin**, whose original oral histories and photographic materials from her research with wild horses of the American West, titled “Honest Horses: Wild Horses of the Great Basin,” was recently acquired by the American Folklife Center



“The Phantom and the Broomtail” by Paula Morin

at the Library of Congress. The materials include over 1,300 black and white film negatives and contact sheets, plus 72 recorded oral history interviews and transcripts. Also included are up to 25 archival giclée prints made from Morin’s hand-painted black and white photographs. Morin’s book of the same title was published in 2006 by the University of Nevada Press. “The Morin Collection is an important addition to the Folklife Center’s documentation of contemporary western culture,” said Elizabeth Peterson, director of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. “We’re thrilled to have it in our collection.” The materials were compiled from 1999 through 2003 when Morin, a resident of Missoula, received a Rural Community Assistance grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Forest Service to explore the meaning, significance and impact of wild horses. Her research led her to desolate areas in five states where wild horses roam on federal herd management areas, as well as observing them on Indian reservations, national wildlife refuges, private land, and at a high-security military base. “The negatives and original prints have a place in the larger historic photographic tradition, as well as offering a glimpse of wild horses at a particular time and place,” notes the artist. “More personally, several of the oral history participants have also since passed away. Now all of these stories, opinions, memories and images will be available for the public to learn from and appreciate for generations.”



“I Told You We Were Sisters” by Dana Boussard

performances, panels and exchanges with the writer. The Drawing Center is dedicated to avant-garde approaches to the drawing medium and is located in Soho. Boussard has been commissioned to create glass installations, drawings, paintings and textile works throughout the country and is the recipient of numerous awards.

Meagan Thompson, a Montana-based artist working in photography, whose food-inspired images appear in “Food for Thought,” a juried theme exhibition on display Aug. 21-Sept. 13 at 440 Gallery in Brooklyn, NY. Artists from across the nation responded to a tongue-in-cheek call for entry that asked, “What is on the mind of every starving artist? Food!” Thompson’s images are from a much larger series that focuses on treats and the color spectrum. In these works she exploits the pleasure small food items offer by featuring food on backdrops that match colors in the foods. The effect is a rainbow of sweet and salty visuals. “The juror chose the puffy food,” says Thompson, referring to the images she took of jet-puffed marshmallows photographed on white and cheese puffs photographed on orange. “The call for entry says that artists should confront current issues like the national obesity epidemic, and that’s really important, but my images are more about fun, pleasure, enjoyment,” says the artist. The images, she adds, are “simple, easy, light. I want my work to mimic that feeling. It’s fun, like how you looked at food when you were a kid.”

Helena physician and photographer **Richard S. Buswell**, whose fourth book of his photography, *Close To Home*, was chosen as a finalist for the New Mexico Book Association’s 2014 Southwest Design and Production Award for Excellence in the Art and Photography Division. The foreword for the book was written by George Miles, the curator of the Collection of Western Americana at Yale University, and the introduction was written by Julian Cox, chief curator at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. *Close To Home* was published by the University of New Mexico Press in support of a national tour of this body of work being circulated by the Montana Museum of Art and Culture of the University of Montana. The “Close To Home” exhibition was most recently on display through Aug. 30 at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art in Great Falls. Buswell has been photographing Montana ghost towns and homesteads for 43 years. His photography is in the permanent collection of 217 museums, nationally and internationally.



Close to Home by Richard Buswell

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Send us your good news

Artists, writers, musicians, arts educators and arts administrators: Please let us know about major awards and accomplishments, especially beyond the borders of Montana.

Send your good news to Congrats, c/o *Lively Times*, 33651 Eagle Pass Trail, Charlo, MT 59824; or email: writeus@livelytimes.com.

If you include a digital photo, please make sure it’s at least 200 lines per inch (lpi or dpi) or file size of over 500kb (no more than 2mb, please).



“Treats No. 1” by Meagan Thompson

Congrats compiled by Kristi Niemeyer for *State of the Arts*